

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: MUNICIPAL SHARED SERVICES

DATE: NOVEMBER 7, 2007

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Supervisors O'Connor
VanNess
Sheehan
Belden
Tessier
Merlino

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

Supervisor Mason

OTHERS PRESENT:

Representing the City of Glens Falls
Michael Mender, Assistant to Mayor
Josh Milton, Recreation Superintendent
Judy Villa-White, Ward II, Common
Council
Bennet Driscoll, Ward V, Common
Council
William H. Thomas, Chairman
Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative &
Fiscal Services
Supervisor Girard
Supervisor Kenny
Supervisor Geraghty
Supervisor Sokol
Supervisor Stec
Supervisor F. Thomas
Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board
Representing Planning & Community
Development:
Patricia Tatich, Director
Wayne LaMothe, Assistant Director
William Lamy, Superintendent, DPW
Paul Butler, Director, Parks, Recreation &
Railroad
Leonard Fosbrook, President, Economic
Development Corporation
Todd Shimkus, Adirondack Regional Chamber
of Commerce
Debra L. Schreiber, Legislative Office Specialist

Mr. O'Connor called the meeting of the Municipal Shared Services Committee Meeting to order at 11:01 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. VanNess, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee Meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Josh Milton, City of Glens Falls Recreation Superintendent, who distributed a copy of an analysis that reflected the revenues and

expenses for East Field, *a copy of which is on file with the minutes.*

With the assistance of the Warren County Department of Public Works (DPW), the Glens Falls Comptroller's Office and Mayor LeRoy Akins, City of Glens Falls, Mr. Milton said he compiled a list of the various expenses incurred at the East Field complex, which included the stadium, Little League fields, field house, playground, swimming pool, bath house, basketball courts and anything else located on the property. According to the analysis, he said, almost \$6,000 per month was expended to a professional landscaper, Jim Girard Landscape Maintenance, for field maintenance at the stadium while other local municipalities, such as Saratoga Springs, relied upon their Recreation Department employees to perform field maintenance operations.

Mr. Mender entered the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Mr. Milton went on to explain that the City of Glens Falls employed lifeguards, recreation attendants and leaders for the programs they sponsored each summer totaling approximately \$2,800. In addition, he noted, the City of Glens Falls DPW employees performed periodic maintenance at the field, such as after a scheduled event, which he estimated to be \$2,500. In summation, Mr. Milton related the total cost to operate East Field was approximately \$12,800 per month or \$154,104 per year.

Ms. Tatich and Mr. LaMothe entered the meeting at 11:06 a.m.

Continuing on to page 2, Mr. Milton stated in 2006 the total revenue generated by East Field was approximately \$48,185 compared to \$22,081 in 2007. While the revenues from Summer Jam 2007 were still being compiled, he noted, Summer Jam 2006 generated almost \$13,000.

Mr. Milton apprised that an additional two to three employees would be hired to complete the warming hut renovations so the residents of the surrounding communities could enjoy ice skating on the pond this winter.

Mr. Milton briefly listed some of the organizations that utilized the East Field Stadium, such as the Glens Falls High School (football games), the Green Jackets (football games), the Golden Eagles (baseball games), Summer Jam, as well as the Drum and Bugle Corps. He further noted the public had access to the East Field Pool from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Mr. Milton said he had been apprised that several years ago the Glens Falls Little League expressed their desire in taking over some property between the stadium and warming hut to add a fifth field to the complex in hopes of attracting additional tournaments. Currently, the Little League complex consisted of four fields and operated the concession stand at no cost to the City of Glens

Falls, he added.

In 2006, Mr. Milton indicated two companies submitted proposals for capital improvements to the bleachers totaling between \$615,000 to \$646,100. After a recent meeting with Paul Butler, Director of Parks, Recreation & Railroad, they concurred the stadium required the most attention. Mr. O'Connor noted the capital improvement estimates were essentially a year-and-a-half old. With respect to the stadium lights, Mr. Milton stated he contacted National Grid and was informed the \$2,000 cost to operate those lights was a misconception. In response, Mr. Kenny stated the lighting expense would increase significantly if Warren County were involved in promoting field activities and events. He queried whether the field maintenance was a bid contract and Michael Mender, Assistant to Mayor, responded affirmatively. Mr. Tessier said it appeared the figures reflected on the analysis were multiplied by twelve to determine the monthly cost. Mr. Milton replied the field maintenance costs were multiplied by eight and divided by twelve to determine both the monthly and yearly costs.

Mr. Girard queried whether the landscaping expense was paid by the County through the voucher system and Mr. Milton said he was informed by DPW they were billed a specific amount each year. In response to a query by Mr. Girard, Mr. Mender confirmed that Warren County paid the landscape expense for East Field, as well as the maintenance costs for the lights and building as part of the contract with the City of Glens Falls for recreational venues.

Mr. Sheehan asked what revenue was generated and expenses incurred from hosting Summer Jam and Mr. Mender answered the concessions were provided by the Glens Falls Civic Center and any revenues were appropriated to their budget. Mr. Belden queried what percentage of the \$150,000 the County appropriated to the City of Glens Falls went to East Field and Mr. Mender replied it was less than half. He further apprised there were no labor charges paid from the funds received by the County.

A discussion ensued.

According to figures supplied by Mr. Milton and the current intermunicipal agreement with the City of Glens Falls, Mr. VanNess stated Warren County was already paying approximately half of the total expenses to maintain East Field. Therefore, he said, if the County contributed an additional \$80,000, the maintenance expenses would be fully paid. Mr. O'Connor suggested that perhaps a further review of the various expenses might determine whether any expenses were duplicated or additional savings could be derived.

In order for the City of Glens Falls to ascertain additional capital ventures for East Field, Mr. Girard commented the municipalities must share some of the program responsibilities. Mr. Milton said it was his understanding, the City was only willing to relinquish the stadium, as the playground and pool were frequently utilized by the local residents. Judy Villa-White, a representative of Ward II, said the general consensus of her constituents would concur with Mr. Milton.

Patricia Tatich, Director of Planning & Community Development, indicated that she had discussed seeking a grant application for East Field with Wayne LaMothe, Assistant Director of Planning & Community Development, as well as Kyle Wilbur, a representative from the New York State Department of State.

In order for a “fundable” application to be successful, Ms. Tatich explained:

- 1) two or more municipalities must enter into an intermunicipal agreement to reduce costs and consolidate the responsibilities of a facility; or
- 2) if the consolidation had already occurred, she said, there must be a need for capital improvements; or
- 3) upon the consolidation of services/responsibilities, an entity would undertake the management operations, thereby creating a reduction in staffing or services.

Without knowing the full intent of the City of Glens Falls in terms of their desire to maintain or become a partner with the County, Ms. Tatich said she was unsure whether an application could be submitted.

Ms. Tatich commented that in her discussions with Mr. Wilbur, he reminded her about the SMSI (Shared Municipal Services Incentive) grant that Warren and Washington Counties received relating to the Fire Training Center. She further explained that these awards were based upon performance; therefore, she recommended clarifying the uncertainties prior to applying for a grant. It would be disingenuous for them to apply for grant funds when no clear definitive decision had been ascertained on how the operations of East Field would be conducted, commented Ms. Tatich. As part of the application process, Mr. LaMothe said an intermunicipal agreement must be submitted explaining the responsibilities of each entity, as well as any cost savings to be derived by the consolidation of services.

Mr. VanNess apprised there was a \$400,000 SMSI grant with Washington County for a new Fire Training Center. He stated an architect/engineer had been hired to perform a study and ascertain a feasible parcel to house the Fire Training Center. In conversations with the architects and engineers, he said, he estimated some preliminary plans to be submitted within the next six to eight months. Due to the opposition the County had received to the Fire Training Center being located on the ACC campus, he indicated the process was moving slower than expected. Ms. Tatich

explained when New York State evaluated a grant application, they reviewed the County priority level, whether project commitments had been achieved and whether a “net savings” would be derived.

Mr. O’Connor stated the Board of Supervisors recently passed Resolution No. 645 of 2007 to advance an intermunicipal agreement with the City of Glens Falls to apply for an SMSI grant in the amount of \$200,000 for each municipality to improve East Field. In addition, he said, it was his understanding the City of Glens Falls passed a similar resolution supporting the grant application.

At the previous Municipal Shared Services Committee Meeting, Mr. VanNess indicated the Committee expressed the desire to enter into an intermunicipal agreement to determine whether grant funds could be obtained. However, he said, they were now informed the application could not be submitted until the County took possession of the property. Ms. Tatich emphasized the agreement must accompany the grant application to show the project had a net savings derived by both entities.

Mr. Merlino exited the meeting at 11:42 a.m.

A discussion ensued.

Mr. Belden suggested scheduling a meeting between the members of this Committee and the Glens Falls Common Council outlining the responsibilities of each entity to East Field. Mr. O’Connor said he did not anticipate meeting the 2008 SMSI grant application deadline of December 15, 2007; therefore, he suggested scheduling a meeting to assist them in applying for this SMSI grant for 2009.

Mr. Sheehan recommended a proposal be drafted prior to the meeting between the Board of Supervisors and the Glens Falls Common Council so they had something to expand upon. In response to an inquiry by Bennet Driscoll, a representative of Ward V, Ms. Tatich stated these grants were set forth by New York State in their ongoing attempt to consolidate services. She said she would frequently encourage communities to visit the State with their draft proposals. To have a successful SMSI grant application, Mr. LaMothe emphasized two criterion must be met: 1) a consolidation of services must be shown; and 2) a financial savings must be derived. Alternatively, he said, there were other economic development grant applications available to communities.

Mr. Girard stated East Field was a valuable piece of property that the City of Glens Falls could not afford to operate because Warren County was doing it for them. Instead of utilizing this parcel 60 times a year, he suggested hosting the Adirondack Balloon Festival Moon Glow, the tow trucks competition, the fire chiefs conference, additional concerts, and perhaps the baseball field could be depicted in Warren County tourism brochures, thereby increasing attendance, as well as revenue to support new

bleachers for thousands of people rather than hundreds of people. Mr. Girard said he was told by the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors that this was a “doable” item and he did not want this grant to convolute what they were attempting to accomplish. He indicated there had to be other available funding sources, and it was his understanding the only way they could obtain these funds was with County involvement.

Todd Shimkus, Adirondack Regional Chamber of Commerce, suggested making inquiry of the Y.M.C.A. as their membership had now exceeded 10,000 members. He said it was his understanding the Y.M.C.A. had outgrown their current facility (including fields) and they were researching cooperative ventures with municipalities in Warren and Washington Counties to run additional youth activities offsite.

Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative & Fiscal Services, noted the East Field revenues had decreased 25% and they were losing the Glens Falls High School football games in 2008. While there had been discussions involving the elimination of Jim Girard Landscape Maintenance, he said, the teams that played in the 2006 National Junior College World Series rated East Field as the “best” field they had played on. However, he stated, the condition of the bleachers, backstop and dugouts were the reason they did not return. Mr. Tessier added that many of the professional teams would not play at East Field due to the condition of the whole stadium. He stated that each year Warren County contributed \$50,000 to the City of Glens Falls for East Field improvements and he was unsure where those funds were expended. Mr. Tessier said he attended a Glens Falls Common Council meeting many years ago and they made it perfectly clear at that time they did not want the County involved.

Mr. LaMothe suggested seeking a grant to have a feasibility study performed to determine whether a shared service would demonstrate an economic return on the investment. In response to the statement by Mr. Tessier, Mr. Driscoll commented the City had changed its opinion on County involvement. Mr. O'Connor stated he would schedule a meeting with members of the Glens Falls Common Council, Mr. Girard and himself to discuss the possibility of having a feasibility study performed.

Ms. Tatich explained it had become a policy of the Planning & Community Development Department to discuss their involvement in the community with their Planning Committee. She added that she would welcome the opportunity to participate in “study” discussions to assist the Planning Committee.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion by Mr. VanNess and seconded by Mr. Belden, Mr. O'Connor adjourned the meeting at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra L. Schreiber

Legislative Office Specialist